

REMARKS

The present Amendment is filed in response to the non-final Official Action dated February 4, 2009. The Official Action rejected all of the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,953,340 to Scott *et al.* ("*Scott*"). By this Amendment, independent Claims 1, 10, and 18 have been amended. Reconsideration of the claims in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' attorney during a telephone interview conducted on March 17, 2008. During the interview, it was generally agreed that *Scott* fails to disclose a network communication device having first and second portions that are respectively communicably connectable, in parallel with one another, to a first point and a second point on a bi-directional communication network. Instead, *Scott* discloses that

. . . data sent from any data devices in the first domain 14 intended for one or more data devices in the second domain 16 is transmitted according to the first protocol to the converter module 174, which converts the protocol and re-transmits the data to the repeater module 176 according to the second protocol. For example, if the first protocol operates at a first rate of 10 Mbps and the second protocol operates at a second rate of 100 Mbps, then the converter module 174 converts between the first and second data rates. The repeater module 176 re-transmits received data to all of the ports 154 associated with or otherwise coupled to the second domain 16. The repeater module 176 . . . transmits data communicated from any of the data devices in the second domain 16 to the converter module 174 . . . which data is converted to the first protocol and is re-transmitted to the switch module 172.

See col. 10, ll. 36-52. That is, the first and second domains of *Scott* communicate through the serially connected switch module (172), converter module (174), and repeater module (176).

In light of this fact, independent Claims 1, 10, and 18 have been amended herein to expressly recite a network communication device having first and second portions that are respectively communicably connectable, in parallel with one another, to a first point and a second point on a bi-directional communication network (or the use of such a

device). For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 10, and 18, and also the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over *Scott*.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments presented above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims of the present application are in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued in due course. The Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 07-0868.

Respectfully submitted,

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